

## **If you Live By My Example, You'll Be Blessed**

### **John 13:1-17**

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#### **I. Introduction**

In the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the events of the Last Supper and the institution of Communion are recorded. Their accounts do not include the Foot washing, as John's account does. Yet John does not mention the Communion, as he saw no need to repeat what was already reported by the other three. He included more of Jesus' teachings or instructions, which here was directed exclusive to the twelve for the purpose of preparing them for leadership. In the first part of the Gospel of John, more of the focus was on Jesus' public ministry to the multitudes, the next chapters 13-17, deals with Jesus having a one on one with those who He loved. Jesus once said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly (Jn.10:10). The first twelve chapters Jesus spoke of eternal life and how to obtain it to the masses, and chapters 13-17, He is offering himself as the sole source of eternal life. This Gospel was written long after the other three, so John left out what was already written but gave us additional details.

#### **II. Lesson: If You Live by My Example, You'll be Blessed!**

##### **1. vv.1-5.**

The most important question about any event is why it happened or what was the purpose. John shows us six reasons or motives:

- a) Jesus knew that His hour had come. The time of this Passover is the divinely appointed time. All through His ministry, Jesus knew that He was the 'Lamb of God" and the nation would be gathered to offer the Passover Lamb, during the Feast that was instituted in Egypt (Ex.12). The blood of the Lamb was smeared over the doorpost of the Israelites, so the death angel passed by it. Jesus sees himself as what that blood was symbolizing. The time has come also when He as a grain of wheat, must fall into the ground and die, resulting in a great harvest (Jn.12:24).
- b) Jesus had an overwhelming love for his disciples. He loved them to the end. There are some versions that says to the uttermost, which indicates that He loved very deeply. Jesus knew what was going to happen in the next twelve hours, yet He pressed on to prepare these disciples, who had become like family to him. Later He will tell them, in verse 38, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends".

One of the lessons we can learn, is that the Jesus also desires to have that kind of relationship that he had with them with us. Jude 1:21 implore us to keep yourself in the love of God”.

- c) The enemy had already planted in the heart of Judas to betray Him. The devil knows how to plants thoughts into the minds and hearts that will lead us into hurt and destruction.
- d) Jesus knew the Father had given all things into his hand. He was the director of this event and not a victim of a Passover plot. Jesus very well what, when, and how the events would take place.
- e) He knew where he came from, exactly who He was and that He was going back to God. Jesus was always in control and moved with a quiet majesty through every event which He encountered, even to the Cross. It is important that we also remember who we are in Christ when we are going through life journey. We no longer should allow ourselves to become victims of Satan’s plots, because we are a part of the God’s kingdom. We are loved by our Father and our sins are forgiven by Him. It is a truth that we must remind ourselves over and over every day.
- f) He poured water into a basin and began to wash and wipe the disciples’ feet. He had taken off His outer garments leaving himself with nothing but the loincloth, like that of which a slave or servant would wear. We need to read Luke’s 22:24 to get a better view of what else went on during this time as Jesus was about to institute the Lord’s Supper. Luke tells us that a dispute arose among them about who would be considered the greatest. It is believed it is then when Jesus rose from the table without a word, takes off His garment and kneeled before them. They were shocked and embarrassed. They did not know what to make of this.

## 2. **vv.6-9.** The meaning of this Act.

We must be appreciative of Peter, because he represents us, Christians. He always does what we may have done had we been present. He was clueless in what Jesus was doing and clearly by his question Peter was offended by this action, because like us his view of authority did not taking on the role of a servant. In Peter’s view Jesus was not following tradition of one in Authority who had people to serve him. The other disciples remained silent, but Peter could not refrain himself. Jesus encouraged Him to submit with a promise that they would understand later (v.12-20). Peter was so sure he was right and was unaware of his pride and self-righteousness all wrap up in his statement

by saying “you will never wash my feet.” Jesus respond with a warning, “he will have no part with Him: no fellowship, no companionship; no sense of His Presence. This promise did not satisfy Peter who objected to Jesus’ act in the strongest terms. Peter viewed the situation as unacceptable. Jesus replied on the spiritual and symbolic level. Jesus was speaking of spiritual cleansing and Peter understood Him on the physical level. If his refusal to submit to the foot washing meant the termination of their relationship, Peter was willing to submit to a more thorough cleaning. Peter words reflect his impetuous nature and his love for Jesus as well as his failure to understand and his self-will.

3. **vv.10-11.**

Jesus is simply indicating what was true in the culture of the day. Everybody took a bath in the morning but as they went about their day along the dusty roads their feet became dirty. They only needed to wash their feet and not a complete whole-body bath. To the disciples (except to Judas), he says, “You are clean.” Jesus is talking about “the washing of regeneration” (Titus 3:4-7); of being born again; being renewed by the Spirit and becoming a new creature in Christ. This only must happen once. Jesus continues, “you do not need to wash your feet. What this symbolizes, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (John 1:9). That is the daily walk—the daily cleansing. We do not need a new birth repeatedly, but what we need is to acknowledge daily the evil in our lives and admit it to God. If you want a sense of Jesus walking with us daily acknowledge our need for cleansing and going off his path for us. This did not apply to Judas because he had never been born again. Even though outwardly he was a disciple, but inwardly he had not changed.

4. **vv.12-15.**

Jesus gives the second explanation of the washing but first He asked them a question designed to make to make them think. This is something far more significant, not only what He had done but what He wants them and us to do. What is the example? Jesus had given an example of the true basic of authority. Real authority comes from loving service. Read Luke 22:25-27. The disciples eagerly followed Jesus even when they did not fully understand Him and knew Him as their Teacher and Lord. But in the church or among others, He rejected hierarchical authority.

As Paul puts it in Galatians 5:13—on how to serve others. This is for all Christians, but especially those who are in positions of teaching and authority in church. Their authority, as leaders, should be related to their willingness to serve others who are not in positions. Jesus is saying we have a ministry to serve one another and to help keep our spiritual feet clean. Paul captures this thought in Galatians 6:1 and James 5:16 This event in the Upper Room forms

the basis for true leadership. This constitutes one of the greatest challenges the church faces today. We are called to demonstrate a different kind of authority, but what has happened, is the church has imported the worlds' view into their midst. There are many hierarchies' structures in the church where we esteem those at the top. Jesus never taught that but instead taught that he who serves win the hearts of others.

5. **vv.16-17.**

Notice the emphasis on “doing” here. It is not enough to teach it or to hold it as a mental principle, but to do it--- serving one another. How? Do something that someone needs done expecting nothing in returned. ...in humility value others above yourselves not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others (Phil.2:3-4. “By love, serve one another.”

**III. Conclusion. Jesus displayed His humility and servanthood.**

For the disciples, the washing of their feet was in direct contrast to their heart attitudes at that time because they were arguing about who would be the greatest. For us, washing feet is symbolic of our role in the body of Christ. Further, when Jesus washed their feet, “He had given them and us an example, that you should do as I have done to you” (v.15).

As his followers, we are to emulate Him, serving one another in lowliness of heart and mind, seeking to build one another up in humility and love. When we seek preeminence, we displease the Lord who promised that true greatness in His kingdom is attained by those with a servant's heart (Mk.9:35; 10:44). When we have that servant's heart the Lord promised, we will be blessed (John 13:17).